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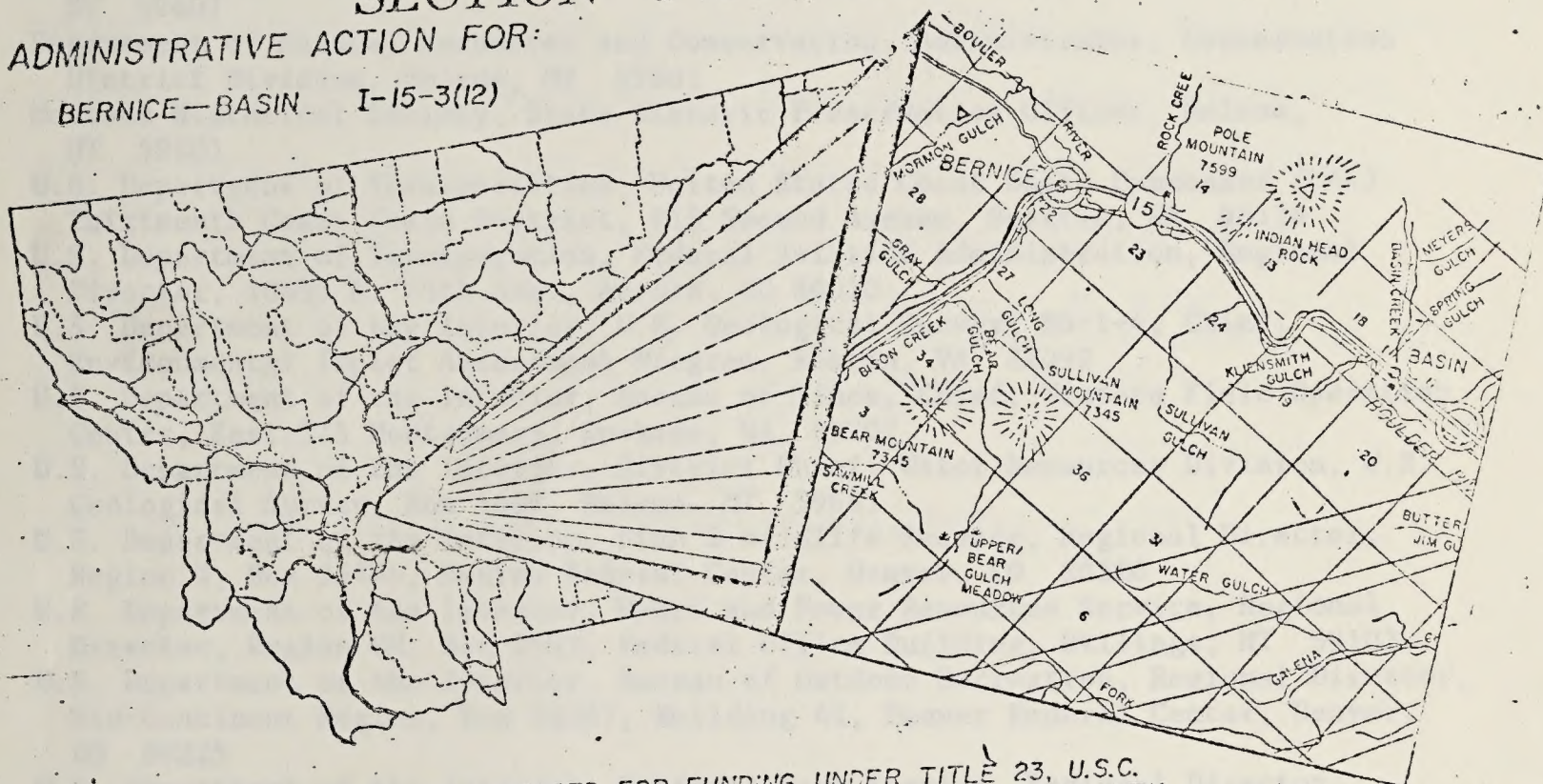
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FHWA-MT-EIS-72-04-D

DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION  
AND  
STATE OF MONTANA  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
DRAFT  
SECTION 4 (F) EVALUATION

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION FOR:

BERNICE-BASIN I-15-3(12)



THIS HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT IS PROPOSED FOR FUNDING UNDER TITLE 23, U.S.C.  
THIS STATEMENT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT WAS DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH  
THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND IS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO  
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(C), 23 U.S.C. 128(d) and 16 U.S.C. 470(f).

RONALD P. RICHARDS, Director, Department of Highways

By: J. R. Beckert  
J. R. Beckert, Administrator  
Engineering Division

3-27-80  
Date

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

MAY 29 1980

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY  
ADMINISTRATION

H. Steward  
Federal Highway Administration  
for Division Administrator

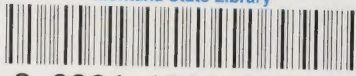
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MT 59601  
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Thirteenth Coast Guard District, 915 Second Avenue, Seattle, WA 98174  
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Director, 10455 E. 25th Ave., Aurora, CO 80010  
U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey; MS-1-4, Chief,  
Environmental Impact Assessment Program, Reston, VA 22092  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines, Chief, Western Field Operation  
Center, East 315 Montgomery, Spokane, WA 99207  
U.S. Department of the Interior, District Chief, Water Resources Division, U.S.  
Geological Survey, Box 1696, Helena, MT 59601  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service, Regional Director,  
Region G, Box 25486, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80226  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Water and Power Resources Service, Regional  
Director, Region UM, Box 2553, Federal Office Building, Billings, MT 59103  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Regional Director,  
Mid-Continent Region, Box 25387, Building 41, Denver Federal Center, Denver,  
CO 80225  
U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Regional Director,  
Rocky Mountain Region, Box 25287, 655 Parfet Avenue, Denver, CO 80215  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Missouri River Basin, Special Assistant to the  
Secretary, Room 688, Building 67, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225  
U.S. Department of Interior, Assistant Secretary - Program Policy, Director,  
Environmental Project Review, Washington, D.C. 20240  
Environmental Protection Agency, Deputy Regional Administrator, Region VIII,  
Suite 900, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, CO 80203  
Environmental Protection Agency, Director, Office of Federal Activities,  
Room 537 West Tower, Waterside Mall S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460  
Federal Housing Administration, Housing and Urban Development, Office of the  
Director, 616 Helena Avenue, Helena, MT 59601  
Bureau of Land Management, Montana State Office, Box 39157, Billings, MT 59107  
Department of the Army, Omaha District Corps of Engineers, 7410 U.S. Post Office  
and Courthouse, Omaha, NE 68102  
Board of County Commissioners, Jefferson County Courthouse, Boulder, MT 59632  
U.S. Department of Agriculture, State Conservationist, Soil Conservation  
Service, P.O. Box 970, Bozeman, MT 59715





Louis S. Wall, Assistant Director, Office of Review and Compliance, Advisory  
Council of Historic Preservation, P.E. Box 25085, Denver, CO 80225  
Postmaster, Basin, MT 59631  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Area Managers, Federal Building Room 3035,  
316 North 26th Street, Billings, MT 59101  
F. M. Jensen, Box 486, Basin, MT 59631  
Al Glasser, General Delivery, Basin, MT 59631  
John O'Neill, Box 413, Basin, MT 59631  
Rose Donahue, General Delivery, Basin, MT 59631  
Dan Merchant, Box 434, Basin, MT 59631  
Griff Davidson, Box 451, Basin, MT 59631  
Beverly Young, Box 402, Basin, MT 59631  
N. Parsons, Box 493, Basin, MT 59631  
Montana Automobile Association, Box 4129, Helena, MT 59601  
Montana Stockgrowers Association, Box 1679, First National Bank Building, Helena,  
MT 59601  
University of Montana, Attn: Dee Taylor, Department of Anthropology, Missoula,  
MT 59601  
Montana State University, Attn: Dr. A. P. Samson, Department of Anthropology,  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
Montana State University, Institute of Applied Research, Bozeman, MT 59715  
Rick Graetz, Box 5630, Helena, MT 59601  
Friends of the Earth, Attn: Ed Dobson, Box 882, Billings, MT 59103  
Sierra Club, Upper Missouri Group, Attn: Jack Schmidt, Box 515, Helena, MT 59601  
The Wilderness Society, 4260 East Evans Avenue, Denver, CO 80222  
The Montana Power Company, 40 East Broadway, Butte, MT 59701  
Mountain Bell Telephone Company, Incorporated, Attn: F. R. Ketron, Plant  
Supervisor, Box 1716, Helena, MT 59601  
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SUPPLEMENTAL SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION  
1-15 (12) Basin - Basin

Reviewer:

The enclosed Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation is to document the considerations and consultations studied for a determination that there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to the use of 4(f) land which consists of various historical sites in and near the community of Basin. This information will supplement that contained in the Final Environmental Section 4(f) Statement distributed on October 18, 1973 and another draft Supplemental Section 4(f) Evaluation circulated in December, 1979.

Comments and questions will be accepted for 45 days after the date of this publication. If no communications occur during the time period it will be assumed the person or agency does not have any comments. An extension, not to exceed 30 days, may be requested. All comments should be sent to:

Preconstruction Bureau  
Montana Department of Highways  
2701 Prospect  
Helena, Montana 59601

DV:ee:201G

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SUPPLEMENTAL SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION  
I-15 (12) Bernice - Basin

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SUPPLEMENTAL SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION  
I-15 Bernice - Basin

I. NEED

Presently a two lane primary highway, Route U.S. 91, is in place along the proposed Basin interstate route. The existing highway is narrow (26' wide) and of moderate curves in general. The areas just west of Basin and about 2 miles east of Basin are exceptions, however, where the road follows narrow canyons with sharp curvature requiring travel speeds around 40 miles per hour. Pavement condition in these areas is fair to poor.

The new project is necessary to complete Interstate 15 through Montana. Presently Interstate 15 is completed from the Idaho border north, to the Elk Park - Bernice project with the exception of a few sections in the Dillon area which are not yet built to 4-lane interstate standards.

It is also completed from Boulder to the Canadian border. In addition nine structures are completed or under contract on the Basin-Boulder project I-15-3(13)157.

The total monies expended to date on the Basin Route from Butte to Boulder has been \$17,641,869.00.







## II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project involved in this 4(f) evaluation is noted in the final environmental impact statement, dated October 18, 1973 as I-15-3(12) on the approved Basin Route. The project will consist of four-lane interstate design with a narrow median.

The EIS addressed four alternate routings: (1) Basin Route, (2) Nez Perce Route, (3) Whitetail Route and (4) The Boulder Valley Route. The no-build alternate was also considered. The Basin Route was approved. The other three routes and the no-build alternate were classified as imprudent and unfeasible.

The original 4(f) statement dealt only with parklands which were impacted within the selected highway corridor. Since then the results of an historical inventory of resources advised of the potential of Basin and associated resources area being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. A draft Section 4(f) evaluation was processed and distributed in December, 1979, covering the portion of the interstate route between Basin and Boulder. It documented the considerations studied regarding the usage of an ore loading complex located at the junction of High Ore Creek and U.S. 91 approximately three miles northeast of Basin. We are awaiting approval of the final 4(f) determination that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the taking of that resource. Three other properties eligible for inclusion to the Register and impacted by the project area are dealt with in this evaluation. This will complete all anticipated environmental and section 4(f) evaluations on the Butte-Boulder section of I-15





### III DESCRIPTION OF 4(f) INVOLVEMENT

The 4(f) involvement with historic properties was identified when the alignment was surveyed by an archaeological team from the University of Montana in late spring 1978. At that time, an historical inventory of resources was recommended as efforts had begun to nominate Basin and associated multiple resource area to the National Register of Historic Places. To evaluate and assess the historical properties, a study was undertaken by the individual who nominated the area to the National Register. This work was subcontracted through the University of Montana Anthropology Department.

The Montana Department of Highways, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration, has consulted the State Historic Preservation Officer to determine the area of potential environmental impact as outlined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The proposed action will have direct adverse effects on significant historical resources. Accordingly, a determination on properties potentially eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Place was requested, and the following resources located within the proposed project's area of impact were determined eligible.

#### 1) Jib Mill Foundation and Water Flume

The Jib Mill was destroyed by fire in 1975. The foundation is located adjacent to the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks south of the Boulder River approximately 300 yards west of





Basin. Once the most important mining enterprise in the economic development of Basin, the complex included the Hope, Katie, and White Elephant mines located on the slopes above the mill foundation. Full scale mining began in the late 1880's and the mill was built in 1900, financed by Augustus Heinze, Butte "Copper King." High grade gold was discovered in 1919 and the Jib Consolidated Mining Company began expanding. By 1925, production had not caught up with development costs. The entire property went into a trusteeship and was ultimately shut down and sold. The mines were not significant producers after 1934 due to problems with flooding.

The Jib Mill water flume was built in 1900-03 and begins above the remains of the Jib Mill along the talus slopes next to the Boulder River and continues to Redrock, some 2 miles west of Basin. A supported flume, it was once used to transport water to the Jib Mill and to provide for storage up Sunshine Gulch in case of fire in Basin. Large sections of the flume have been destroyed by falling rock along the talus slope where trees and other vegetation have not provided protection. Most of the flume is in a very deteriorated condition often just being a dark line of rotting lumber on the hillside.

The proposed alignment will cover a portion of the area where the Jib Mill had stood until destroyed by fire several years ago. A burnt out structure nearby once was used as an office





building will also be impacted. Sections of the water flume west of this area will be disturbed by construction activities.

2) "150" House

Bawdy houses were an integral part of the frontier mining camps, and Basin was no exception with four brothels in operation throughout the boom-and-bust growth period of the community that lasted until about 1930. Only one of the "150" houses still stands. It is located about 100 ft. north of the existing Burlington Northern railroad tracks and is owned by Mr. Pat O'Neill of Basin. The architecture is characteristic of the local vernacular building type and also possesses interesting interior features peculiar to its past function. The location and landscape of all the "150" houses were quite similar and reflect important physical relationships within the town's setting. The proposed alignment will not affect the House but associated buildings will be relocated outside the proposed right-of-way to the south.

- 3) The townsite of Basin qualifies for National Register listing as an historic district because of its role in the mining development of Montana during the period from 1860 to 1920 and because of the association of persons significant in the state's history such as Augustus Heinze, W.A. Clark, and Granville and James Stuart. Architectural styles and types vary considerably in Basin ranging from log cabins, tarpapered board shacks, modern trailer houses, frame cottages, and brick





business buildings. Few structures would qualify for the National Register on their own merit and some, such as the trailers and modular homes, obviously detract from the district's integrity. Aside from these intrusive structures, the range of architectural styles reflect the mining era and associated social patterns when viewed holistically.

The historic district encompasses approximately 90 acres. The boundaries were determined as a result of numerous field inspections and consultation with the Historic Preservation Office of the Montana Historical Society. An aerial photograph of the district and the proposed interstate alignment appears in Part V of this statement.

The historic district is bounded by the Loiselle house on the east, Basin Creek Bridge on Basin Creek Road to the north, the brick smoke stack of the Glass Brothers Smelter just west of Basin, and the northern railroad right-of-way limits, which correspond with the proposed highway right-of-way, form the southern boundary line. The proposed alignment will traverse immediately south of the Basin Historic District, and the "150" House will be the only definite involvement with 4(f) property within the historic district. There will be an adverse effect to the district under the terms of 36CFR800.3(b).





The Jib Mill foundation and water flume are outside of these limits but are considered discontiguous elements of the district as they are separated from Basin by the railroad grade and Boulder River.

The history of Basin spans the entire hard-rock mining period in this region. It is part of a rather large center of mining development and served as a supply point for other camps in the surrounding area. Basin has endured longer in comparison with other settlements due largely to its location along a major transportation corridor.

Aboriginal man also utilized this transportation corridor, but hydraulic mining, road and railroad construction have destroyed nearly all traces of prehistoric activity. There are some recorded archaeological sites within the Boulder-Basin canyon, but none will be adversely affected by construction of this project.

#### IV ALTERNATIVES

The original section 4(f) statement, included in the Butte-Boulder Final Environmental Impact Statement, addressed four alternates plus a no-build alternate and is evaluated in the Phase 1 section of that statement. Three alternates and the no-build alternate were found to be neither prudent nor feasible and the Basin Route was selected as the most desirable in August, 1974.





This determination was based on the impact ratings and the considerations which are covered in Phase 1, Section VII, "Evaluation and Route Selection", of the original statement. They include evaluations of the effects on all alternate routes in the fields of engineering, environmental planning, economics and sociology. Public opinion was also a consideration.

The Burlington Northern Railroad line had been abandoned from Butte to west of Basin, but the line on through Basin and eastward is still in place. It was recommended to the Burlington Northern Railroad to abandon the line further on to an area east of Basin. This enables the use of the railroad alignment for Interstate 15. The railroad has agreed and the present proposed alignment will replace the railroad through Basin.

Prior to the E.I.S. processing, an alternate had been considered to the north through Basin following the present highway U.S. 91. This line would have resulted in extensive relocation and removal of existing main street buildings, most of which are part of the historic district.

An alternate to the south was also studied. This alignment would have resulted in extensive channel changes of the Boulder River, inconsistent with our policy of incorporating all practicable measures to minimize environmental harm. The south alternate would almost obliterate the Jib Mill foundation and water flume since both are located adjacent to and south of the railroad. The stopes





and exterior structures of the Katie, Hope, and White Elephant mines on the slope above would be impacted to a much greater degree also.

The present alignment will impact a portion of the mill foundation. A structure once used as an office building was gutted by fire several years ago and will be destroyed by the proposed undertaking. Portions of the water flume will be removed at intermittent locations. Impacts in this area were once presumed to be very minor leaving the major portion of these facilities undisturbed in their present deteriorated state. Refinement of the design resulted in impacting more of the mill foundation and several sections of the flume.

The Basin historic district is located immediately north of the proposed highway right-of-way. This southern boundary line corresponds roughly to the present northern railroad right-of-way line. The proposed interstate alignment will not require the removal of the "150" House, but two small buildings associated with it will be impacted and will be relocated nearer to the house.

The alternate to the north would adversely affect the historic district itself by isolating portions of it. This line would bisect the downtown area thereby destroying important components of the district. Recently studies were made concerning alternate access plans for Basin. These studies were prompted by the reaction to the original proposal for the Basin interchange at the



design public hearing phase of the undertaking. The local public felt that plan did not provide adequate north-south access necessary for fire protection and traffic circulation. Closer access for Basin was also desired. Five alternatives were developed which utilize the same interstate alignment but vary the interchange and local access road locations. All five alternatives plus the original plan appear in the Exhibits of this document.

Alt. 1 conforms to the original plans and provides a diamond interchange in one of the few spacially adequate locations along the highway corridor in the narrow Boulder River Canyon. A vehicular grade separation has been added at Station 1174± to improve local traffic service and facilitate fire protection. The interstate grade must be raised 14 ft. from the present railroad bed grade to accomodate the 13 ft. 6 in. vertical clearance of the underpass (min. State Standard). This is 6 ft. higher than the original proposal which afforded pedestrian access only. The cross road roughly coincides with an existing street and will be 24 ft. wide. The determination on whether to pave this section of the roadway has not yet been made. Any minor crossroad improvement such as paving will be the only intrusion to the historic district, and it is not expected to have any adverse effect on the district.

The frontage road just south of the interstate alignment was formerly designed to parallel the interstate more closely but now incorporates a curved section moving the frontage road





approximately 300 ft. south. The curve provides a reasonable grade for the vehicular separation access road and minimizes the elevation of the interstate grade.

Elements of the interchange (i.e. ramps, crossroad) would be moved within the historic district boundaries in Alt's 2, 3, 4 & 5 thereby either isolating portions of the district or entailing the destruction of between three to eight homes. Alt. 2 is a diamond type interchange at Sta. 1180. The crossroad passes over the interstate requiring that the ramps be raised and 3 to 4 homes moved or destroyed. Alt. 3 is the same as Alt. 2 except that the southbound offramp is changed so traffic must pass through Basin to enter back on the interstate. Alt's. 4 and 5 also use the "split diamond" design and would take 6-8 homes and 4-5 homes respectively. The grade separation of Alt. 5 is moved closer to the center of town at Sta. 1165 between the Boulder River and Basin Creek.

Alt. 5 has the same elevation requirements as Alt. 1 with the highest point being where the interstate crosses the access road and a 4-5 ft. rise above the present grade of the railroad bed elsewhere throughout the Basin Area. Alt. 5 would bring the visual and audible impact of the interstate closer to the center of town.

Alt. 1 serves the primary need of providing fire protection to areas on either side of the interstate alignment. The diamond interchange design is foremost in highway safety and results in





less confusion to the highway traveller. The town of Basin is readily accessible to the interstate but its main street is not a thoroughfare routing traffic to and from the interstate. Any potential commercial development would be likely confined to the outskirts of Basin. Alt. 1 is viewed as the least disruptive plan in that no important elements of the district are jeopardized and intrusions are kept to a minimum, however public meetings have evidenced the local public's concern that access is not adequate for Basin.

#### V AREA AFFECTED

In applying the criteria of adverse effect as set forth in 36 CFR 800.9, the action will alter portions of the Basin historic district and its setting by introducing visual, audible and atmospheric elements out of character with the district.

Although the four-lane portion of the highway plan would have minimal adverse effects to historical resources in Basin, the interchange in alternatives 2, 3, 4 and 5 would involve more impact to the Basin Historic District. Basin would not be along a direct route of interstate highway ingress and egress nor would it be rendered inaccessible with the Alt. 1 interchange location. This is identical to the interchange location proposed in the E.I.S. for the Butte - Boulder interstate route.

Impacts to the "150" House cannot be avoided without a major alignment shift thereby endangering other cultural and natural resources. In this case, two ancillary structures at the rear of



the "150" house must be repositioned on the same lot to exclude them from the northern right-of-way limits of the highway.

Segments of the wooden water flume totalling approximately 3000 ft. will be removed by construction in the steep, narrow sections of the canyon west of Basin, but the extent of the removal will not be significant when compared to the overall length of the flume and its deteriorated condition. The highway embankment will cover most of the Jib Mill ruins, but the remnants of both resources will be adequate for interpretive purposes.

## VI MITIGATION MEASURES

Measures to mitigate impact to the Basin historic district and specific National Register properties have resulted from consultation and agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Montana Department of Highways, the Historic Preservation Office, (SHPO Staff), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Two structures associated with the "150" House will be moved to accommodate the interstate alignment, but it is not felt that this action will significantly alter the site's integrity. Plans detailing the layout of the property and proposed action will be provided to the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for comments before moving the structures.





Construction will not be intrusive to any of the old mine stopes in the area of the Jib Mill foundation, but an access road will cover a portion of the burnt out foundation which has very low visibility in relation to other features of the Jib Mill complex. The sheer vertical slopes and narrow canyon west of Basin pose some critical highway design problems. Removal of some portions of the wooden water flume is unavoidable. Caution will be exercised in the narrow portion of the canyon west of Basin to prevent unnecessary damage to the flume.

An educational interpretive program will be developed by the Montana Department of Highways in cooperation with the Historic Preservation Office of the Montana Historical Society. Its purpose will be to describe the historic properties, both those intact and apparent and those of which only vestiges remain to strengthen the identity of the Basin historic district and to put the resources and events of the region into a coherent historical perspective. The Jib Mill in particular applies here because its operation played an important role in the economic development of Basin. The remnants of the Jib Mill consist of only charred timber, piles of rubble, part of an old boiler and a small portion of the original foundation. The burnt wood and rubble will be removed from the site but the boiler and masonry work will remain for interpretive purposes. Some minor stabilization work at the boiler base may be necessary.





The location of the Basin historic district will be indicated on the State map of Montana.

All the above mitigation measures are incorporated in the Memorandum of Agreement among the FHWA, the SHPO, the Montana Department of Highways and the Advisory Council as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, (See Exhibit 6).

An update on the Preliminary Case Report was prepared as a result of developments in the public hearing phase and minor changes in the design. These changes necessitated an amended Memorandum of Agreement, which has been forwarded to the Advisory Council for approval (see Exhibit 7).

## VII COORDINATION

As part of the environmental assessment phase of this undertaking, the University of Montana was authorized to conduct an archaeological reconnaissance survey along the proposed alignment. The study recommended that an historical study be performed within the project area due to the potential National Register eligibility of several historic resources including the townsite of Basin. The SHPO notified the FHWA that a National Register nomination for Basin and an outlying multiple resource area which covers an extensive area within the transportation corridor had recently been submitted to the Keeper of the Register. A copy was provided to the FHWA with the suggestion that a determination of eligibility be requested.



Subsequent studies and field reviews enabled the FHWA and Montana Department of Highways to assess both the resources and impacts thereon. This process necessitated conferring with the Historic Preservation Office (SHPO staff) and persons from the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. To this date, there has been no concerted preservation effort among the inhabitants of Basin to establish an historic district, but the person who prepared the nomination was consulted frequently and, in fact, was hired to aid in evaluating the resources and effects caused by interstate construction.

After the resources and effects to the historic district proper had been analyzed, a determination of eligibility was requested of the Keeper of the Register. The request was in the form of a consensus determination of eligibility, i.e., all signatories were in concurrence as to the resources' eligibility.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has been contacted for comment on the proposed undertaking and mitigation plan. The signed Memorandum of Agreement represents the resolution of problems and concerns relative to the protection of cultural resources, but an amendment to the Memorandum is being processed due to the minor changes made in final design and the vehicular access facility in Basin.

ee/25K





EXHIBITS

